

Application Serial No. 10/089,798

Date May 17, 2004

Reply to Office Action dated March 17, 2004

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REMARKS

After entry of this Amendment, claims 1 - 5 and 7 - 14 are pending in the application. Claim 6 has been previously cancelled without prejudice. Claims 1 and 9 have been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the invention. Claim 13 is amended to correct the adjective before "opening." The verbiage in claims 1 and 9 have been merely rearranged and no new issues have been added to the claims that would require a new search. Reconsideration of the application as amended is requested.

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed March 17, 2004 and further, as a result of the interview with the Examiner on April 22, 2004. The Applicant appreciates Examiner McAnulty taking the time for granting an interview with the Applicant's attorney.

The Examiner states that no new drawings were received as part of the response filed December 10, 2003.

Another copy of the one sheet of new drawings is enclosed as also filed in our December 8, 2003 Amendment. A copy of the return postcard stamped by the United States Patent and Trademark Office indicating receipt of the one sheet of drawings is also enclosed.

Claims 1 - 5 and 7 - 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Blanchet et al. in view of Mansel. Claims 1 and 9 have now been amended to more clearly identify the distinguishing features over the cited prior art. Claim 1 requires that the output shaft-to-crank connection is a press fitting and that one of the gear housing and the gear housing cover has an opening on a side facing away from the crank for supporting an end of the output shaft during the press fit operation and the output shaft faces away from the crank. Claim 9 requires that the output shaft is connected to the crank in a press fit operation and one of the gear housing and the gear housing cover has an opening extending therethrough wherein the opening is on a side of one of the gear housing and gear housing cover facing away from the crank for supporting an end of the output shaft during the press fit operation. The aforementioned features in claims 1 and 9 are not shown or disclosed

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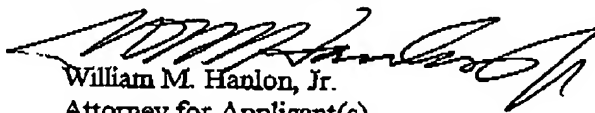
shaft is supported separately from the cover or the gear housing to prevent damage to the gear assembly during the press fit operation. These features provide an advantage over the cited prior art.

It is respectfully submitted that this Amendment traverses and overcomes all of the Examiner's objections and rejections to the application as originally filed. It is further submitted that this Amendment has antecedent basis in the application as originally filed, including the specification, claims and drawings, and that this Amendment does not add any new subject matter to the application. Reconsideration of the application as amended is requested. It is respectfully submitted that this Amendment places the application in suitable condition for allowance; notice of which is requested.

If the Examiner feels that prosecution of the present application can be expedited by way of an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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